

From: Randy Robert Boring
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

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Please do not agree to any settlement with Microsoft which lets them increase their ill-gotten market share.

One of the most dastardly methods of increasing market share is to give away your product to customers in a sector (such as education) that is contested by a rival. After the customers have installed your 'free' software, they get used to using it and base their workflow upon it. Then, when an upgrade is needed (perhaps that version stops working with the latest operation system software), those customers are usually retained, but now at a large cost to the customer.

Do NOT let Microsoft give away copies of their software to anyone! It is NOT a penalty to them in any sense. It is a marketing strategy. One which is not only successful for Microsoft, but is also very detrimental to its rivals, as they have to compete with a 'free' product. That is VERY difficult to do.

It also seems wrong for an award not to go to those who won the case, but that's for someone else to argue. I understand the difficulties of finding everyone harmed by Microsoft. Perhaps you could just send a small check to every household in America. You'd be certain to reach every American victim, and it would only overcompensate by a small fraction, as their software runs on about 90% of computers. Maybe include a suggestion that if the person does not feel that they were hurt by Microsoft that they donate that amount to the President's Afghanistan relief fund.

Hope that helps,

-Randy Boring
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P.S. I work for a small company, Thursby Software, which writes software that enables non-Microsoft computers (Apple Macintoshes) to interoperate with Windows PCs. So we sort of compete with them, but we work with them, too.

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